

I acknowledge the traditional custodians of country throughout Australia and recognise their continuing connection to land, waters and community. I pay my respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past, present and future.¹

Tipperary of the South: Irish Migration Patterns from Clonoulty, County Tipperary, Ireland to Boorowa, New South Wales.

In December 1891 a journalist known as 'The Scout' writing for the *Sydney Mail* wrote of the character of the small town of Burrowa, known today as Boorowa. He noted the distinctiveness of the town which he thought was "due very largely to the fact that the settlers in the district and the inhabitants of the town [were] principally from one nationality - that of 'the dear little Isle of the Shamrock'."² The Scout relates a story told to him "more than once by Burrowa residents: Two settlers, meeting in some distant part of the colony, and one asked the other, 'Have ye been to Ireland?' "No" was the reply, "but I've been to Burrowa".³

It is no accident that the story of the Scout of the *Sydney Mail* could be related about Boorowa all those years ago. Nineteenth century Boorowa *was* exceedingly Irish, and its Irishness was due in no small measure to the migration patterns of the Irish during the 19th century, particularly from the parish of Clonoulty in County Tipperary, Ireland.

A substantial proportion of the population of the Clonoulty parish migrated to Australia during the 19th century and a significant number of those folk found their way to Boorowa New South Wales.⁴

Reid notes "of all the parishes of nineteenth century Ireland, it is the possible link between Clonoulty, County Tipperary and Australia that has surfaced in the historical literature. ... It is a link ... with the pastoral district surrounding the small town of Boorowa in New South Wales ...".⁵

Walderssee identified the strong Irish catholic settlement after the 1820s in the south west part of New South Wales. He observed the migration pattern of the Irish to

¹ <https://www.creativespirits.info/aboriginalculture/spirituality/welcome-to-country-acknowledgement-of-country#ixzz4g57HhPVc>

² 'Concerning Burrowa' *Sydney Mail*, 5 December 1891.

³ 'Concerning Burrowa' *Sydney Mail*, 5 December 1891.

⁴ Reid, RE *Farewell My Children, Irish Assisted Emigration to Australia 1848-1870*, Anchor Books Australia, 2011, p 4.

⁵ Reid, RE *Farewell My Children*, p 118.

Boorowa eloquently describing it as "the transfer of souls from Clonoulty, County Tipperary to the banks of the Boorowa River".⁶

So many people who settled in Boorowa and the surrounding district originated from the Clonoulty parish: there was Patrick Kearney, Michael Ryan, Patrick and James Dwyer, Robert Gooley, Bridget O'Brien, Laurence Barry Ryan and Anastasia Barry Ryan, there was Edward Browne and Stephen and Patrick Stapleton, Phillip and Mary Spencer and their family, William Corcoran and his wife Johanna, all from the parish of Clonoulty. William Corcoran related to Roger Corcoran, and his wife Johanna and sons James and John purchased the *Star Hotel* in Marsden Street which William renamed the *Clonoulty Hotel* in 1874. (The *Clonoulty Hotel* is no longer a working hotel).⁷

Much of this migration stems from the transportation of Edward (Ned) Ryan and his cousin, Roger Corcoran. Both Ryan and Corcoran were transported on the *Surry 1 (2)* and they arrived in the colony of New South Wales on 26 December 1816. Both were assigned to men whose property interests took them to the Yass region of New South Wales. After acquiring their tickets-of-leave they squatted beyond the nineteen counties on the Boorowa River.

Reid notes that Ned Ryan "encouraged kith and kin to join him at Galong near Boorowa".⁸ Ned Ryan sent for his wife and family to reside with him after establishing himself at Galong near Boorowa. The migration of Ned Ryan's wife, Ellen and children Anastasia and John Nagle Ryan was part of a wave of migration from the home parish of Clonoulty to the Boorowa/Galong district.

Ned Ryan's brothers Michael, Patrick and William and their families followed, along with the daughters Mary and Anastasia of a fourth brother Matthew. James Ryan, a son of William Ryan migrated from the United States of America to Australia to be with his family and he too settled in the Boorowa/Galong area.

Another James Ryan and his wife Bridget Ryan (nee Corcoran) migrated to New South Wales on the *Amelia Thompson* arriving in 1839. Bridget Ryan was a niece of Roger Corcoran and cousin of Ned Ryan. James and Bridget Ryan later sponsored Bridget's brother, Thomas Hennessy Corcoran a nephew of Roger Corcoran, his wife Mary Corcoran formerly Ryan, and Bridget's (and Thomas') mother, Ellen Corcoran

⁶ Waldersee, J *Catholic Society in New South Wales 1788-1860*, Sydney University Press, 1974 p 177

⁷ Lloyd, H *Boorowa Over 160 Years of White Settlement*, Toveloom Pty Ltd, 1990 p 202

⁸ Reid, RE *Farewell My Children*, p 118

and sister Honora Corcoran. This family group arrived on the *Queen of England* in July 1859. Honora Corcoran later married Patrick Delohery in November 1862. Another sister, Mary Corcoran migrated to New South Wales in 1853 married Michael Comans in October 1854.

Boorowa retains an Irishness exemplified in the Gothic-style St Patrick's Church, boasting the image on a stained glass window of Daniel O'Connell the Liberator of Ireland, commemorating the centenary of his birth. Saints Patrick, Bridget and Columba are pictured and Daniel O'Connell's image is flanked either side by a harp and the Cross of St Patrick. A shamrock features in the centre. Even with today's level of communication Boorowa is remote from Ireland. It was more so in the nineteenth century given the less sophisticated means of communication at that time. Yet the ties to Ireland in the nineteenth century were so strong that the Burrowa O'Connell Centenary Committee was formed and it successfully raised the money to have the stained glass windows installed in 1875.⁹

So to draw the threads together, Boorowa commenced its white settlement as being almost exclusively Irish, with many of its first white settlers migrating from Clonoulty and surrounds in County Tipperary, Ireland.

⁹ Maher, B *A Slice of Tipperary, A Story of Boorowa NSW Catholic Community*, Brian Maher, Calvary Retirement Village, Bruce ACT, 2016 p 5

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